THE Good Fight of Faith.

A SERMON PREACHED

By that Learned and Godly Divine,

Dr. SUTTON,

Late Preacher of St. *Mary Overies* in Southwark.

1. TIMOTHY, 6. 12.

Fight the Good fight of Faith, lay hold on Eternall life.

LONDON,
Printed and are to be sold by SAMUEL MAN, at the *Swan* in *Pauls* Church-yard. 1652.

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THE GOOD FIGHT *of* FAITH.

1. Timothy 6. 12.

Fight the good Fight of Faith: Lay hold of eternall life.

THere be two kindes of enemies; The one, ghostly; the other, corporall. There be two kindes of warre; The one, proper; the other, mysticall. There bee two kindes of

warriours; The one, carnall; the other, ſpirituall. There bee two kindes of weapons; The one, the ſword of man; the other, the Word of God. In the one order of warriours, are you: I am for the other. With the one kinde of enemies none are able & fit to fight, but ſuch as you: we muſt all bear arms againſt the other. In the one kinde of warre you are beaten, and become expert: to meddle with this, were, with *Phormio* in *Tullie*, to diſcourſe of military diſcipline before *Hannibal*. I will acquaint you with the other. The one kinde of weapon you can handle as skilfully as the *Parthians* did their bowes, or the *Beniamites*, *Iudg.*20. did their ſlings: whereof, the one could ſhoot an arrow; the other, caſt a ſtone at a haires breadth. I ſtand heer to inſtruct you how to vſe and wield the other. Experience in the one kinde of warre, commends you to be Champions: but experience in the other, commends

mends you to bee Chriſtians. By your skilfull handling of the one kinde of weapon, you may blank the forces, diſappoint the attempts, and put-by the violent aſſaults of men: but, by your artificiall handling of the other, you may conquer the pride of your hearts, that inſulting and brauing enemy; the venome and poiſon of your fleſh, that traiterous and ſecret enemy; the bewitching charms and incantations of the world, that flattering and ſmiling enemy; the furious inrodes and incurſions of Satan, that old and malicious enemy.

When you haue done moſt honourable and worthy ſeruice in the one kinde of warre, you can haue no more but a ſmoke of honour, a ſhadow of wealth, a blaſt of fame, a wreath and coronet of Palm and Laurell, a monument of Braſſe or Marble, a memory preſerued from obliuion by thin paper-wals: but, when you haue ſerued

in the other, you ſhall bee crowned with a Crown of life, 2. *Tim.* 4. receiue an eternall waight of glory, 2. *Cor.* 4. liue for euer with your Leader & Captain Chriſt, *Phil.* 1. 23. be clothed with long white Robes, the ſigne of purity; wear Palms in your hands, the enſigns of victory, *Apoc.* 7. You ſhall be changed from earthly, to be heauenly ſouldiers; from militant, to be triumphant Saints; from making the aire to thunder with your roaring Cannons, to make the heauens ring with *Hallelujahs* of praiſe, and glory, and victory to the Lamb, and to Him that ſits vpon the Throne for euermore. And therefore, amongſt all your other points of warre, haue minde of this; Αγωνίζε τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως: *Fight the good Fight of faith.*

Mee thinks, my Text is like the Ark of the Teſtimony, wherin was *Aarons* Rod, and a Pot of Manna. Heer is a Rod that made wounds, and ſores, and ſcarres;

ſcarres; *Fight.* But heer is Manna with it: it is *Certamen bonum*, the good Fight; and *Certamen pium*, a godly Fight, the Fight of faith; and *Certamen queſtuoſum*, a gainfull Fight. It is the laying hold vpon eternall life, and looks like *Peter's* three Tabernacles in the ſeuenteenth of *Mathew*: Heer is one for *Moſes*, and one for *Elias*, and one for *Chriſt*. In the firſt I ſee *Moſes*, a man terrible and dreadfull; *Fight.* In the ſecond I ſee *Elias* pleading againſt *Baal*, and contending for the faith. In the third, I ſee *Chriſt* crowning his ſouldiers with eternall life. If you would haue a name for my Text, it is a *Pareneſis* or exhortation. If you would ſee the Anatomy, and view the limbs of my Text, heare,

Firſt, the proclamation of war, *Fight.*

Secondly, an incouragement, *Fight the Certamen bonum.*

Thirdly, the inualuable treaſure for which you doo fight, the defence and maintenance of faith.

Fourthly, the Crown propoſed, the reward promiſed, the life of glory prouided for you at the end of your war; an *eternall life*.

Be not diſmaied, though you receiue ſome hurt and wounds, though you loſe ſome of your bloud and ioynts, yea, effuſe your liues and ſpirits in the Field: for, within the Cabinet of this Text, there is a precious oile to heale your hurts and wounds: that is good. And there is celeſtiall dew; whereof, the leaſt drop and ſcruple may cure and reuiue the Dead, though rotten in the graue; and that is faith: *Fight the good Fight of faith*. And what can a warriour expect, at the end of all his deſperate and bloudy Fight, more than this Text doth promiſe? What reward, to a Crown? What Crown, to the Crown of life? What life, to the life of glory? What glory, to the glory of a Kingdome? What Kingdom, to that which is by inheritance? What inheritance, to that

that which is immaculate, vndefiled, incorruptible, and reſerued for you in heauen, 1. *Peter* 1.4? All this happineſſe, and more, lies wrapt and incloſed within this compendious Cloſure, Επιλαβοῦ τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς: *Lay hold of eternall life.*

Theſe ſhall be the limits and bounders of my ſpeech: wherein, it is my purpoſe to be plain; and my praier, to be profitable. And now, euery man to his Colours: gird on your ſwords: pluck vp your hearts. Think neither of fleeing away, nor deferring the battell, nor of any treaty of peace, nor of any other thing but fighting. I ſee the enemy come marching: and I heare the Lord of Hoſtes from heauen beſpeaking you with promiſes and perſwaſions, euery one of you, in the words of my Text; Αγωνίζου, *Fight.* God himſelf is a man of warre. Diuine Oracles call him, *Dominum Exercituum*, The Lord of Hoſtes. Aboue all creatures, he loues ſouldiers;

ſouldiers; aboue all exerciſes, commends fighting; aboue all actions, he honors warlike and martiall deſignes.

Therefore hee exhorts to put on Armour, *Eph.6.* promiſes to crown the Conquerors, *Apoc.2.* charges and commands to fight, in the words of my Text. The Legions of Angels are warriors, to fight againſt the Dragon. The Starres of heauen are warriors, to fight againſt *Iabin* and *Siſera*. The Elements are warriours, to fight againſt *Sodome*, *Korah*, and the old world. The very *Animalia inſecta* are warriours, to fight againſt *Egypt*. All degrees of men are warriours; ſome fighting for the enlargement of Religion, and ſome againſt it; ſome for the aduancement of the Goſpell, and ſome oppoſing it; ſome for the maintenance of the truth, and ſome traducing it.

The Magiſtrate muſt fight, *Gladio poteſtatis*, with the ſword of authoritie. The Miniſter muſt fight, *Gladio Spiritus*,

tus, with the ſword of the Spirit. Euerie Chriſtian, *ſub vexillo, et ſub auſpicio Spiritus*, vnder the banner, and by the direction and power of the Spirit. No Age, no Sex, no Condition, no Calling, may plead exemption from this Fight. The old and bed-rid *Neſtor*, whoſe Almond-tree hath budded, muſt gird on his harneſſe, and goe out to warre. The tender nurſes, with their babes in their armes; Timorous & ſhaking mothers, with their infants in their wõbes, muſt learne to march, and handle the ſpeare. The young and tender ſtems, whoſe legges and armes bee weake, and flexible as Reeds, muſt lay aſide their painted horſes, & call for ſwords. The life of euery man is a continuall warre, in the 7. of *Iob*: but the life of euery Chriſtian man, is a continuall Battalion, and bloody skirmiſh, either againſt the diuell, an enemie, *quem fugare potes, non fugere*; you may make him flye from you, *Iames* 4. but you can

no way flee from him. Hee aſſaults the firſt *Adam* in Paradiſe, the ſecond in the wilderneſſe, *Dauid* on his Palace, *Amnon* in his bed: or againſt the world, an enemy, *quem fugere licet, non fugare*: wee may flie the corruption that is in the world, but cannot enforce it to flie from vs: Or againſt the fleſh, *quem nec fugere poſſumus, nec fugare*, ſaies *Bernard*: we can neither fly from our owne fleſh, nor make our fleſh fly from vs: Saint *Ambroſe, de Pœnitentiâ, lib. 1. cap. 14.* giues the reaſon: *Non enim nos, ſed in nobis nos ſequitur*: this enemie is our Inmate, and cannot bee diſlodged.

The Life of a Chriſtian man is nothing but the ordering of a maine battell againſt the great and inuincible *Armado* of rebellious ſinne. In the front, and breſt of this Army, prepare to encounter with Ignorance: which enemy, though hee bee blinde, and his eyes put out, *Cui lumen ademptum*, yet are his weapons like the weapons of *Goliah*;

Goliah; his ſtrength, like the ſtrength of *Beemoth*; his ſtripes, like the battering of a tearing Cannon; *Monſtrum horrendum, informe, ingens*: if this monſter be not killed, it will lead you, like an *Ignis Fatuus*, into inextricable Labyrinths and Mazes of error, *Mathew* 22. make you proud Iuſtitiaries, *Romans* 10. 3. infect you with Idolatrie, *Galatians* 4. 8. make you crucifie againe the Lord of life, *Acts* 3. 17. leade you into captiuitie, *Eſay* 5. 13. let deſolation in at your windowes, *Eſay* 27. ſend deſtruction poſting after you, *Hoſea* 4. 6. make you ſubiect to a fearefull curſe, *Pſalme* 19. and perpetuall exiles from the life of glorie, *Epheſians* 4. 13.

Ignorance being put to flight, you ſhall encounter with ſuperſtition: which enemy, though hee ſeeme to be a foole, one that dares not ſtirre in a morning before all his Beads be dropt, his breſt croſt, his face ſprinkled; that, if a Hare croſſe his way, if hee ſtumble

at the threſhold, if the Salt haue fallen towards him, if the Rauen haue croked vpon the next roofe, if hee haue dreamed of a faire garden; hee makes his Will, takes his leaue of the world, goes home, thinkes of nought but death, and dares not fight: yet if this Aduerſarie bee not conquered, he will ſet the God of Iſrael at defiance, ſcorne the Hoſte of Iſrael, make the pillars of Religion to ſhake, and the ſtrongeſt caſtles to totter, yea, driue the Lord frō amōg you, & ſtrengthen the hands of the deſtroyer againſt you, *Amos* 5.9.

Superſtition once quelled, you meet with prophaneneſſe: which enemie, though hee ſeeme to bee but a ſot, his heart but a dead piece of fleſh, without all feeling of loue, feare, care, paine, or the deafe ſtrokes of conſcience; one that at firſt ſinned againſt God, and cared not; now is become ſenſleſs, he ſins againſt God, and knowes not; one that hates goodnes, mockes inſtructi-

ons,

ons, and deſpiſes grace; a man would thinke, that the earth could not harbor ſuch a caitife as this: and yet you ſhall all meete him in your fight; and, if you ſmother him not, mercy ſhall be hid from your eyes, *Heb.*12.17.

Cloſe at the heeles of this, followes Couteouſnes; one that goes in a ſordid and baſe attire, lookes as if hee were ſtarued: when you meet him, you may knowe him by his forefathers coat, which he neuer meanes to change; marke him well, and ſtrike home: for, if you kill him not, hee makes a liue-leſſe piece of earth to bee your Maſter, a corruptible piece of gold to bee your god; makes you to let money, to ſell time, to bee ſicke of your neighbours field; tells you, that there is no goodnes, but in gaine; makes you loſe your friends, pine your bodyes, murther your ſoules, 1. *Cor.*6.

When you haue encountered with theſe, and thouſands moe, in the Rere

you ſhall meete with as mortall an enemy as anie of theſe: and that is *Sloth* and *Idlenes*. You would thinke, that this were ſome Votarie, and religious perſon in a Cell, or Cloiſter, leading a contemplatiue life; ſuch a one, as had rather freeze, then fetch wood; chuſes rather to beg, then take paines; one that eateth and prayeth himſelf aſleepe; ſeems to bee nothing, but a lumpe of cold clay in a ſtanding water: yet if *Hieroms* rule, *ad* Ruff. *Epiſt. 6. Semper age aliquid*, bee not obſerued; if the ſleepy *Sybarite* bee not put to death, it will open a window to ſinfull obiects, peſter and infect the ſoule with vnhallowed thoughts; turne the whole body into a ſtanding Bog and Fenne, fit for nothing but the ſpawning and breeding of vermine; ouercharge the whole man with ſinnes, as the field of a bad husband is couered with weeds; ſuffer him to bring forth nothing but thorns and briers; whoſe end is to bee burned,

burned, *Heb.6.8. Cum quo certet, mens pia ſemper habet*: If you be the ſouldiers of Chriſt, you ſhall neuer want *Cananites* to fight againſt. *Putata repullulant, fugata redeunt, extincta reaccenduntur, ſopita excitantur*; If you could cut downe ſinne like *Hydraes* head, it growes againe; baniſh ſinne, like the ill ſpirit that haunted *Saul*, it returns againe; caſt it into *Epimenides* his ſleep, like *Hieroms* Fox, 151. *Epiſt. ad Præſid.* it will awake, and rouze it ſelfe againe. If you could put ſinne to death like another *Virbius* and *Euridice*, it will quicken and reuiue againe.

And heere let no man ſay, that exhortation to fight is vnſeaſonable, as if our *Manna* were full of wormes, and the Quailes come out at our noſtrels, and were offended at the length of our peace, as if wee longed to ſee our Townes and Cities burning, our Houſes robbed, Temples ſpoiled, our women rauiſhed, *Et natos ante ora parentum*,

rentum, our children bleeding on the pauement, ſprawling on merciles pikes, our friends dying, our foes inſulting, *et miſeram vrbis faciem*, as *Æneas Siluius* ſaid of *Conſtantinople*. No, no: but I exhort to fight againſt enemies at home, which are more dangerous then enemies abroad; to fight againſt your ſinne, that you may bee free from bloody warres, the effect and off-ſpring of ſinne.

The managing of this warre, is the preuenting of the other: the proclaiming of warre againſt our ſins, would tie the hands of God from making war againſt our perſons. It may bee, ſome think, that (like the old *Romanes*) we haue clipt the wing of peace, that ſhee doats vpon vs, and dandles our Kingdome in her lap: but, where *Iezabel* begins to paint herſelf, and to multiply her fornications, can wee look for peace? If we let the Ark of God be taken from vs, can we look for peace? If

we

we let Religion ſink, can wee promiſe peace? I remember what *Macrob. Saturnal.lib.2.cap.4.* reports of *Cæſar*, that, hearing of the death of a *Romane* Souldier, who had liued merrily, and yet died greatly in debt, hee deſired to buy the bed and pillow whereon hee lay; deeming ſome rare vertue to be in that bed, whereon a man could ſleep ſo ſecure, that liued in ſo great a danger. I deſire no pillow nor bed from vnder him: But yet, with *Cæſar*, I wonder how wee ſleep ſo quietly, when our danger is ſo neer. It may bee, not from any forain Nation. What then? Yet from our alone ſinne, the moſt ſecret plots, and treaſonable conſpiracies, *Hoſea* 4. And ſo I come from the proclamation of warre, Ἀγωνίζε, *Fight*, to the encouragement to the vndertaking of it; Ἀγωνίζε τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα, *the good Fight.*

A war may be tearmed good, when the cauſe is iuſt, aiming at the peoples peace, the Countrey's health, the Goſ-

pels aduancement, the improouement of God's glory in earth. Sometimes it is otherwiſe, when it is vndertaken for reuenge, for the enlarging of poſſeſsions, for the wooing and ſoliciting of titles and honours. But this Chriſtian exerciſe of Armes againſt the troops of ſinne, is alwaies good,

Firſt, becauſe commanded. God's will is the rule and meaſure of goodneſſe. Hee doth not will, becauſe it is good: but the thing is good, becauſe he wils it.

Secondly, good in regard of the end. *Bellum geritur, vt pax acquiratur*, ſaith *Aug. ad Bonif. Epiſt.* 50. and *Gratian*, out of him.

Thirdly, in regard of the Champions or Agents in the Chriſtian Fight: None exerciſed in it, but good men; none but good men fit for it; no good men exempted from it.

Fourthly, good in regard of the good ſucceſſe and ſpeed: Yee ſhall bee more than

than Conquerors, *Romanes* 8.37.

Laſtly, good in regard of the glorious reward, Eternall life. Now to the iſſue.

It is, of all other, the beſt and worthieſt profeſsion, To bee a poore militant Chriſtian. It is a grace, To beare Arms in your ſcutcheons; but a greater grace, To beare Armes in the Field. The *Romanes* had ſouldiers in ſuch repute, that euery one of them had the name and title of *Miles*, a Knight. *Alexander* was wont to call his ſouldiers his companions; *Cæſar*, to make them his companions. But alas! theſe were but ſhadows of ſouldiers; and theſe, but painted honours. It was the honour of *Moſes*, that he ſerued God, *Deu.* 34. the honour of *Dauid*, that he was a man after God's owne hart, 1. *Sam.* 13. the honour of that cloud of witneſſes, and band of ſouldiers, *Abel*, *Henoch*, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Iacob*, *Ioſeph*, *Gedeon*, *Barach*, *Sampſon*, *Iephte*, *Samuel*, that in their warres againſt Heatheniſh Idola-

ters, againſt the violence of fire, the fury of Lions, the terrours and exquiſite torments of racking, mocking, ſcourging, ſtoning, impriſonment, pouerty, baniſhment; that in their skirmiſhes, and conflicts with fleſh and bloud, they had pleaſed God, in the eleuenth to the *Heb.* When a man hath ſpent himſelfe in great mens ſeruices, either they will not doe him the good they can, or they cannot doe him the good they will; if both willing and able, they bee ignorant what is beſt. But when hee hath ſerued in this ſpirituall warre againſt Atheiſme, ſuperſtition, looſeneſſe of life, and the whole trained band of murdering & prodigious ſinnes, he ſhall be ſure to haue whatſoeuer is good, *Pſalm* 34.10. Therefore *Moſes* may well forſake *Pharaoh's* Court, to be the ſeruant of God. *Dauid* may well enough forſake *Saul's* Tent, to be door-keeper in the houſe of God: for, *dulcis dies vna ſuper millia dierum*, Pſalm 84. Ima-

Imagine the honour that was done to *Mordecai*, when hee had vpon him the King's apparell, rode vpon the King's horſe, with a royall Crown vpon his head; and I will be bold to borrow the ſpeech of *Ahaſhueroſh* in the eightth of *Eſter*; All this, and more, ſhall bee done to the poore militant Chriſtian, whom God will honour. Imagine the happineſſe of *Haman* in his Prince's fauour; the contentment of *Sampſon* with his *Dalilah*; the comforts of *Elias* preſerued by Rauens; the ioy of *Paul* and *Silas* viſited by Angels; the honors of *Dauid* aduanced to a crown; and I will make bold to apply the Prophets ſpeech, *Pſalm* 149. Such honors, ſuch pleaſures, ſuch comforts, ſuch inward ioies, ſuch, and infinitely greater, laſting and euerlaſting happineſſe haue all his poore and militant Saints.

Let this pull down the pride of wicked perſons, bee they in the eye of the world neuer ſo high and honourable:

for, if they bee not militant againſt ſin, but maintainers of it; not *mallei vitiorum*, hammers of ſinne, but hatchers of it; they are diſhonourable and worthleſſe Caitiffes.

The concluſion: If you deſire to bee bleſt in a ſeruice, then ſerue GOD. If you deſire to be honorable Profeſſors, turn Chriſtian Souldiers. If you long to weare a Crowne, begin to fight. If you would fight as you ought, then fight the good Fight. To knowe whether it be the good Fight or no, then let it bee the Fight of faith. Which is the third Particular: whereof, by your patience, I come now to ſpeak.

Of faith. That which was written in *Philip* of *Macedon*'s Buckler, *Quod fauſtum & felix*, that doo I ſay of this point. Well may it bee ſpoken: well may it bee taken: well may it work: deep root may it take: good ſpeed may it haue, and God's bleſsing be vpon it: *Fight the good Fight of faith.* It is *pro fide*, for

for the faith: ſo all Expoſitors of all ſides, both ours and Papiſts: the ſame which the Apoſtle mentioneth in the third verſe of the Epiſtle *Iude*. Some note heer, it is Αγωνίζεσθαι, *Fight*: and there is Επαγωνίζεσθαι, which imports a hot and violent Fight. At the firſt view I diſcern a double Theoreme; the one, that Faith and Religion haue many enemies; the other, that euery good member of Chriſt muſt turn ſouldier, and be defender and maintainer of the faith. Of theſe in order.

It is a Principle and Maxime in Religion, that there is a God: but this hath enemies; the open Epicure, and the cloſe Atheiſt. It is a Maxime, that there is but one true God: but this hath enemies;

Firſt, Worldlings: whereof, the Ambitious hath honour; the Voluptuous, pleaſure; the Couetous, Mammon for their god. Some haue their bellies, *Phil.* 3.19. and ſome, the diuell for their god, 2. *Cor.* 4.

The

The second enemy to this, is the Romish Church, which set vp many gods. The Pope is *Dominus Deus noster*. The Virgin is a more merciful Sauiour than God, saith *Discipulus de temp. Ser.* 161. And she saues by her infinite mercy, whom God in his infinite iustice doth not, saith *Michael de Hungar.* out of *Orosius*. It is a Maxime, that all Scripture is by diuine inspiration: but this hath enemies; Turks, who refuse the Word, and embrace a blasphemous *Alcaron*; Iewes, who tread the new Testament vnder foot; Papists, who craftily vndermine this Principle, first, teaching, that Hebrew and Greek are corrupted, to credit their vulgar Latine; secondly, by magnifying the authority of the Church, to disparage it. It is a Maxime, that the Scripture is a perfect Rule of faith: but this hath enemies; first, carnall persons, led by sense and feeling, not by this Rule; secondly, Romish Catholicks, who make the Word not

not a Rule, but a thing ruled by authoritie of the Church. *Ludouicus*, a Canon Lateran, ſpake in the Trent Councell, *Scriptura eſt mortuum atramentum.* The Biſhop of *Poictiers* ſaith, It is *res inanis et muta*; *Pighius*, *Scripturæ ſunt muti iudices*; *Eckius*, *Euangelium nigrum, Theologia atramentaria, naſus cereus Leſbia Regula.* But once more.

It is a Maxime, that whoſoeuer denies Ieſus to bee Chriſt, *viz.* anointed King, firſt, in ſauing and deſtroying; ſecondly, in pardoning ſinnes; thirdly, in making lawes to binde mens conſciences directly: Prieſt, firſt, offering ſacrifices for the ſins of men; ſecondly, in making interceſsiō to God for men: Prophet, firſt, reuealing Gods will; ſecondly, enlightening mans vnderſtanding; thirdly, framing mans heart to obedience; the ſame is Antichriſt, *Iohn* 2.22. But this hath enemies, eſpecially Popiſh Catholicks: I ſpeake boldly, that their religion denies Ieſus to be Chriſt,

becauſe they rob him of theſe three Offices. Firſt, of his kingly Office: for they giue part of it to the Pope, making him to remit ſinnes properly, giuing him to make lawes, which binde the conſcience properly, as the Lawe of God, a power coequall with Chriſts power: and thus they make their *Boniſaces*, their *Innocents*, their *Gregories*, Checkmates with the Sonne of God.

Secondly, they rob him of his Prieſtly Office; giuing to a Maſſe-prieſt, power to offer ſacrifice propitiatorie for quicke and dead; yea, euerie Papiſt hath a piece of it, becauſe euerie one of them may ſatisfie the iuſtice of God for his ſinnes, by his owne merits; and for his interceſsion, ſome of them aboliſh it: for, no Catholike deſires Chriſt to pray for him, ſaies the *Rhem. Annotat.* in 1. *Tim.* 2. Other deale it among the Saints; among whom, the Virgin *Marie* hath the greateſt ſhare. And theſe are their Interceſſors, not only

ly by their prayers, but by their merits.

Thirdly, they rob him of his Propheticall Office: for, this they beſtow vpon euerie Pope, who, without Scripture, determines infallibly, by internall aſsiſtances of a ſpirit lockt in his owne breſt, all pointes of faith and life: which is the proper office of Chriſt alone, who is perpetuall Doctor of the Church. Time will not ſuffer mee to reckon euerie point of Religion, and to ſhew who bee enemies to it; this taſte ſhall be ſufficient: and therefore I apply my ſelf to the ſecond Theorem.

Euerie good member of Chriſt muſt turne ſouldier, and become a defender of the faith. That which *Epaminondas*, the worthy *Theban* ſouldier in *Tullie*, *lib.* 5. *Epiſt.* 12. reſolued concerning his buckler, *I will either defend thee, or die for thee*; and being wounded to death, vſed no ſpeach but this, *Num ſaluus eſt clypeus meus?* Is my buckler ſafe? muſt bee the Chriſtian ſouldiers reſolution

for his Religion, and faith: *I will either defend thee, or die for thee.* *Bucolcerus*, at the yeere 965. reports of the Nobles of *Polonia*, that when the Gospell is read, they clap their hands vpon their swords, and begin to draw them out; intimating by that ceremonie, their resoluing to defend the faith, and willingnes to hazard their liues for the Gospels safetie. And this defence of faith consists in fiue duties. First, sound and conscionable preaching of it; the dutie of the Ministers. Secondly, the cherishing of good seed when it is sowne, and weeding out cockle, and hemlock; the dutie of the Magistrate. Thirdly, the confession of truth. Fourthly, the example of life. Fiftly, the prayer; common dueties of all professors. God hath put a sword into the Prophets hands, to fight against heresie. *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius* and *Augustine*, say, It is another *Helena*, *quia dissensiones parit*; and *Vipera*, *quia matrem*

trem occidit; and *Perdix, quia ouis alienis incubat*; a *Chamelion*, and *Proteus, quia mutat*; *Taurus, quia ſuperbit*; and *Vulpes, quia fallit*. If hee fight not againſt theſe, no Paſtor, but Impoſtor; [illegible] a keeper, but a deceiuer of the people; and God hath giuen him a ſword to ſlay *Agag*, and all his cattell; originall impuritie, and all his droues of vnhallowed thoughts; to buckle with proud prodigious ſinnes, as *Paul* did with beaſts at *Epheſus*, 1. *Cor.* 15. to ruinate Satans kingdome in the hearts of prophane liuers. If careleſſe of this, then is he not *Præco*, but *Prædo*: hee ſhall not receiue the reward of a Prophet, but of a thiefe. In a word, the Prophet muſt maintain the faith, by preaching truth, and confuting error; by commending vertue, and diſparaging vice; by confirming the weake, and confounding the obſtinate; by prouing of orthodox concluſions, approuing goodnes and innocencie, improuing his labour and

paines, reproouing ſin and prophaneneſſe.

The ſecond dutie is the cheriſhing of good ſeed, when the husband-man hath ſowne it; the preſeruing of truth as a chaſte Virgin; the ſuppreſsing of Hereſie and Idolatrie, with the broachers and abettors of it. For this purpoſe God hath giuen the Magiſtrate a ſword: but it lies wrapt, like *Goliahs* ſword, in a linnen Ephod. If the Magiſtrate be conniuent, the law is like the *Roman Lex Iulia*, falne aſleepe; that the Enuious may ſafely ſowe his tares; the Idolater ſafely ſet vp his Calues; the Impoſtor ſafely vent his Hereſies; the *Painim* bake his cakes to the Queene of heauen; the ignorant Votarie creep to his Image; and euerie man chooſe his owne religion, make his owne god, ſacrifice to his owne Idol. Then *Elohim* are but *Elilim*: thoſe whom wee take to bee gods on earth, are but guilded Statua's. *Conſtātine the* Great was wont to

to define a Magiſtrate thus, *Magiſtratus eſt cuſtos vtriuſque Tabulæ.* That is it wherewith they are truſted; Gods whole ſeruice, and defence of Religion. But many times it comes to paſſe, that they doo him leaſt ſeruice in this kind, who owe him moſt. *Tacitus, Annal. lib. 6 &c.*

The third point of this defenſiue warre, is confeſsion; which is no leſſe then the ſtanding againſt the gates of hell, by bearing witnes to the truth. I am ready to die for the name of Chriſt, *Acts* 21. When *Sylla* in *Valerius Max. lib. 3. c. 8.* would proclaim *Marius* a traytour, *Q. Scæuola* made this replie: *Nunquam efficite, vt propter exiguum ſenilem ſanguinem*: If I oppoſe *Sylla* in the iuſt defence of *Marius*, hee can take nothing from mee but a little old and cold blood. A noble reſolution; and fit for our imitation. Let vs rather burne, then bow to the Idoll which *Romiſh Nabuchadnezar* hath ſet vp; rather

ther die for the Name of Christ, then leaue the marke of the Beast vpon vs; rather lose our head from our shoulders, then renounce that Head who is ascended into the heauens; rather effuse our blood, and die glorious Martyrs, then liue Apostates, and die comfortlesse. Would fainting spirits be encouraged vnto this, let them learne this lesson of the Apostle, *Rom.*8.37. *In all these we are more then Conquerours.*

The fourth point is good example of life. They that in profession shine as lights, must in their liues bee pure and blamelesse, as the sonnes of God, *Phil.* 2.19. This doth not onely commend our faith, but helpe to propugne and defend our faith, as being a powerfull motiue to winne our Aduersaries to our side. I much mistake, if S. *Peter* do not make a good conuersation more effectuall to conuert an vnbeleeuer, then the Word it selfe. *Let wiues be subiect to their husbands, that they which obey not*

not the Word, may be wonne by a godly conuerſation, 1. Peter 3.

The laſt point of this defenſiue warre, is prayer, that God would goe out with our Armies, maintaine his owne cauſe, change the weather, and ſend a gracious winde to blowe away the ſwarms of *Ægyptian* Waſpes, and Locuſts, the Palmer-wormes, and Caterpillers, and Cankerworms, who hope to deuoure all the good ſeed which the good husband-men haue ſowne, for more then ſixtie yeeres; that hee would take the Foxes, the little Foxes, which deſtroy the vines; that he would tame the wild Boares, which breake downe our hedges; that hee would reſcue his owne truth from the Talons of thoſe vncleane *Harpies*: *Fœdiſsima ventris proluuies*; who, not ſatisfied with two Sacraments ordained by God, make fiue more of their owne; who, not reſting in Chriſts obedience, perfit his works with works of their

owne; not pleased, that God should haue all diuine honor, part stake with him; not willing, that God should haue all the praise of our conuersion, ascribe part to a naturall power of their owne; not content to send all their requests vnto God, pray to Saints of their owne; not resting on Christs intercession, make *Dominick*, and *Francis Sebastian*, & *Thomas Becket*, with a thousand moe Aduocates and Intercessors of their owne; not content to haue Christ to be their Churches Head, haue aduanced a leaden head of their owne; not content with Scripture to bee the Rule of faith, haue magnified and authorized Decrees, and Canons of their own; not daring to depend vpon Gods mercie for saluation, put confidence & trust in dead works of their owne. And if the Preacher would preach the faith thus soundly; if the Magistrate would preserue Religion thus carefully; if you, braue and heroike spirits, would quit

you

you like men, & fight valiantly in confeſsing truth to the expence of blood, if God call you; in leading liues beſeeming Saints, in wraſtling with God with ſtrong cries and groanes, for the patronizing and eternizing of faith & true religion among vs; then ſhould we all die with *Pauls* ſweet Song in our mouthes: *We haue fought a goood fight: we haue finiſhed our courſe: we haue defended and maintained the faith*: then might we promiſe to our ſoules, that God would thus anſwer vs again: *Well done, good Souldiers: well done, good ſeruants: you haue bin valiant for the faith, and couragious for the truth: now receiue this Crowne: dwell in this Kingdome: enter into your Maſters Ioy.* Which is the laſt particular, whereto I am comming by the courſe of my Text, but am preuented by the courſe of time.

FINIS.